

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Responsive to the Office Action, Applicants have canceled Claims 10 and 21. Claims 1, 3 through 5, 13, 15 through 17 and 22 through 25 are currently amended to distinguish over the prior art and to conform to the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 112. Claims 2 through 9, 11 and 12 remain in the application dependent on amended Claim 1. Claims 14 through 20 remain in the application dependent on amended Claim 13 and amended Claims 23 through 25 remain dependent on amended Claim 22. Consideration for allowance of the claims presented with this amendment is requested for the cogent reasons set forth herein.

In the Office Action the Examiner rejected Claims 10, 21 and 23 through 25 under 35 U.S.C. 112. The amendments to Claims 22 through 25 are believed to overcome this rejection. Claims 3 through 5 and 15 through 17 have also been amended, primarily to conform to the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 112 in view of the amendments to Claims 1 and 13, respectively.

In the Office Action the Examiner rejected Claims 1 through 25 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the teaching of U.S. Patent 6,536,064 to Swink, et al. in view of U.S. Patent 5,815,870 to Deutch, et al., U.S. Patent 4,084,713 to Rohrs, et al., U.S. Patent 5,085,555 to Vartanian and U.S. Patent 2,453,575 to House. Claims 1 and 13 have been amended to include, essentially, the recitation of canceled Claims 10 and 21 regarding the provision of brake mechanism operable to forcibly engage rollers on the support leg assembly to release forcible engagement of the brake mechanism with the rollers in

response to movement of one of the ramp sections from a working position to a stored position (Claim 1), the brake actuator being responsive to movement of one of the ramp sections to its working position to cause braking engagement of the brake shoe members with the rollers (Claim 13). Claim 22 has been amended to further clarify the operation of the ramp wherein the brake mechanism is responsive to movement of one of the ramp sections to a working position to apply braking forces to rollers mounted on a support leg assembly.

At least in the abovenoted respects each of the independent claims in this application (Claims 1, 13 and 22) is believed to patentably distinguish over the prior art. The Swink, et al., Deutch, et al., Rohrs, et al. and Vartanian references all fail to disclose or suggest the provision of a support leg assembly of a ramp having first and second ramp sections, wherein the support leg assembly includes rollers and a brake mechanism which is operable in response to movement to a stored position of one of the ramp sections to release the brake mechanism from engagement with the support leg rollers and responsive to movement of the ramp section to a working position to cause engagement of the brake mechanism to prevent rotation of the rollers. In fact, only the Swink, et al. reference discloses a folding ramp with a support leg assembly which includes rollers mounted thereon. However, the Swink, et al. reference does not suggest the provision of braking mechanism but relies on retractable rollers which retract into the tubular

leg members of the support leg assembly when the second ramp section moves to its working position.

With regard to the teaching of the House reference, this patent discloses a brake mechanism for a hand truck which includes a tow bar or tongue. When the tongue is moved to a stored or non-working position, it engages the brake mechanism to effect engagement of brake shoes with one of the truck wheels. There is clearly no suggestion in the House reference to provide a braking mechanism on a folding ramp as opposed to providing a braking mechanism on a wheeled hand truck. Moreover, the House reference teaches that the brake is to be applied when the tongue or tow bar is moved to a stored or non-working position whereas the brake mechanism according to Claims 1, 13 and 22 is operable in an opposite manner, that is to apply the brake to the support leg rollers when the ramp is moved to a working position. Accordingly, applicants verily believe it would not be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art of folding cargo loading and unloading ramps to modify the ramp of Swink, et al. as suggested by Deutch, et al., Rohrs, et al., Vartanian and, particularly, House to provide a braking mechanism operable in the manner required by the claims now presented. Reconsideration for allowance of Claims 1, 13 and 22, as amended herein, is respectfully requested.

Claims 2 through 9, 11 and 12 remain dependent on Claim 1 and are believed to be patentable for the reasons set forth above with respect to the patentability of Claim 1. Claims 14 through 20 remain in the application dependent on Claim 13 and

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are believed to be patentable for the reasons set forth above in support of the patentability of Claim 13. Still further, Claims 23 through 25 remain dependent on amended Claim 22 and are believed to be patentable for the reasons set forth herein in support of the patentability of Claim 22.

Applicants have made a diligent effort to advance the prosecution of this application by canceling Claims 10 and 21 and by substantially amending the claims now presented to distinguish over the prior art, and conform to the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 112 and, by pointing out with particularity herein, how the claims now presented distinguish patentably. An early Notice of Allowance of Claims 1 through 9, 11 through 20 and 22 through 25, as now presented, is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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Michael E. Martin  
Michael E. Martin  
Registration No. 24,821  
Agent for Applicant(s)

Gardere Wynne Sewell LLP  
1601 Elm Street, Suite 3000  
Dallas, Texas 75201-4761  
Phone (214) 999-3000  
Fax (214) 999-3623

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